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# **‘Moving stories: Memorialisation and its legacies in treaty port China’**

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## **Abstract**

Between 1862 and 1949 foreign communities in Shanghai memorialized in stone and bronze a pantheon of local imperial heroes, as part of a strategy to insert themselves into orthodox circuits of formal empire. The paper explores this story, the history of these monuments, and their contemporary legacy.

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It is not what they built. It is what they knocked down.

It is not the houses. It is the spaces in between the houses.

It is not the streets that exist. It is the streets that no longer exist.

James Fenton, 'A German requiem'

In Shanghai it is the statues that no longer exist that need thinking about. The late-socialist city does not lack public memorials and statues. In particular, its iconic Bund – the riverside embankment on the west bank of the Huangpu river -- hosts three memorials. One of these, the 'Monument to the People's Heroes' (人民英雄纪念碑 Renmin yingxiong jinian ta) is the site of an annual commemorative ceremony on China's 1 October National Day, which marks the anniversary of the formal establishment of the People's Republic in 1949. Since its inception this state has invested energy and resource in commemorating both its own three decades of revolutionary struggle after the formation of the Chinese Communist Party in 1921, as well as an earlier co-opted history of anti-imperialist resistance, or of National Humiliation (国耻 guochi). After 1991 an ongoing 'patriotic education' campaign (爱国主义教育活动 Aiguo zhuyi jiaoyu huodong) led to a vigorous programme of the renovation of sites of memory, and the construction of new museums, historic sites and memorials.<sup>1</sup> This aims to serve the Communist Party's aim to raise and shape understandings of what it portrays as its leading role in rescuing China from 'feudalism' and imperialism. The result it intends is increased loyalty to the party as the body that led China along the 'road to rejuvenation'. The irony that drives this paper, is that it has done so at Shanghai by co-opting both the memorialisation practices of its historic enemies, and in fact by co-opting their specific sites of

memory. As with many facets of post-colonial state practices, the colonial form survives in new nationalist guise.

This paper explores what turns out to be a small gallery of monuments in Shanghai, monuments that moved in fact, most of them, at least once in their lifetime, with meanings that also moved, and which remain in a dialogue with the present. They are omnipresent in photographs of the pre-1943 Shanghai Bund, and they are prominent in discussions about it, in memoir, travelogue and guidebook. It does so to see what these monuments to the foreigner resident's heroes can tell us about Shanghai's history in that period, in particular the history of the foreign presence and foreign power in China, its identities, certainties, complexities and ambiguities. The paper argues that the memorialisation practices of the foreign communities in Shanghai displayed over an 80-year period a consistent pattern of attempts to integrate themselves into wider circuits of memorialisation, mostly imperial circuits. They did this precisely because this city was not in fact a colony. It lay within no empire. The more fundamentally insecure the position of the foreign communities who ran the heart of this city, the more confidently did they mark out their membership of a global community of power through bronze and stone. They competed too, in what they commemorated, or how, and in what they pulled down. This Shanghai case study tells us something about the strategies for incorporation, imagined and concrete, into the imagined community of empires of those outside its formal boundaries. It is inflected all along by issues of finance, urban planning, practical politics and so on, and it is but one arena in which this incorporation was attempted, but it was a visibly tangible one that grew in importance as the power of the foreign presence in China declined.



This essay will first briefly outline the historical background to the development of the two foreign zones in the city, before moving on to discuss the memorials themselves, and then men they represent. The third section will explore the fate of the monuments after the full onset of the Pacific war in December 1941, and into the era of Communist control after 1949. The resurgence of these memorial practices in the late twentieth and early twenty-first century is then considered.

### **1. Internationalised Shanghai, 1843-1943**

In November 1843 the newly-appointed British Consul George Balfour arrived at the city on board a British Naval vessel. Balfour had been before. British troops had taken and occupied the city in the Spring of 1842 as part of the final campaign along the Yangzi which brought to a close the First Anglo-Chinese or Opium War.<sup>2</sup> The experience of occupation had been bitter, and although the Treaty of Nanjing, which terminated hostilities, opened Shanghai and five other ports to British residence, there was little local enthusiasm at Shanghai and at the other ports for leasing property to the foreigners. Balfour eventually secured a local agreement alienating a plot of land north of the walled city of Shanghai along the river bank as an 'English ground'. Laid out along three parallel north-south roads, and six cutting across them east to west, this formed the core of what grew in to the International Settlement. Balfour marked out a large British Consulate lot at the north end of the zone, and British traders then vied with each other to secure waterfront lots. Provision of public goods – roads, jetties etc – became the responsibility of the land-renters, who elected a Committee, later re-established as a Municipal Council to over see this. Overtime it acquired new responsibilities and powers – policing and public health in

particular. It was doubled in size in 1848, and amalgamated with the American concession north of the British ground in 1863. This became the International Settlement, and by 1900 it had grown in size from its original 138 acres to 5,583, and from a small population of some 200 Britons and others in 1850, there were 6,700 foreigners and 350,000 Chinese by 1900. Trade grew steadily. Foreign Shanghai also outflanked colonial Hong Kong, designed as the headquarters of the British China trade, home to a Governor who was initially concurrently Chief Superintendent of Trade, and thereby in overall charge of the British China enterprise along the coast. But the centre of gravity of British trade swung north to Shanghai, and Hong Kong, although it remained important, lost out to Shanghai as the economic heart of the British presence.

The key driver of the development of Shanghai was not so much trade, however, but the fact that in 1853, as a result of the anti-Dynastic Taiping rebellion, tens of thousands of refugees fled east from the rebels who seized control of all the great cities of the region, lodging their capital at Nanjing. The foreign traders at Shanghai found that their lots were no longer valuable simply as an infrastructure for Sino-foreign trade – the export of silks and tea, the import of cloths and (although it did not come into the port itself until after 1858) opium – but were an asset in and of themselves. The business of foreign Shanghai became for many the business of real estate. Thousands of homes were thrown up for Chinese residence. The real estate lobby became an insistent one, helping to reshape the city's demographic and spatial growth. Many Chinese residents stayed on in the International Settlement after the Taiping were finally defeated in 1864, and they helped shape the ways in which the city grew. Fuzhou Road, south and parallel to the Nanjing Road, became

the great cultural street – home to theatres, teahouses, and bookshops. Shanghai was the prime site of the Chinese modern, a window on a world of change. The settlements came to replace the walled city as the heart of Shanghai.

The city in the 1930s was arguably a real capital city for China. It was the financial and cultural capital of the country. It housed the great newspapers and the great publishing companies. It housed the film and recording industry. Politics happened here – the Communist Party was formed here, great mass political movements such as the 1925 May Thirtieth Movement, broke out here. The first great battle of the Sino-Japanese war took place here in the autumn of 1937. All the while this great city was formally mostly subordinated to foreign power, for the heart of the city at the heart of China's twentieth century was run by foreign nationals who sat on the Municipal Council, and by the French authorities. British policemen patrolled settlement streets, overseeing Sikh, Russian, Chinese and Japanese subordinates. Foreign architects designed the buildings that came to dominate the bund. Thousands of foreign nationals filled the cemeteries. By 1935 the International Settlement covered 5,500 acres, the French concession, 4,000. There were about 10,000 Britons in the settlements, 4,000 Americans, 20,000 Japanese, 15,000 Russians, 2,500 French – 42,000 foreign nationals in all.<sup>3</sup>

The great asymmetry at the heart of the Sino-foreign relationship remained, however, and foreign residents in Shanghai and other treaty ports were alive to it. The British dominated China's foreign trade. But although China and Chinese occasionally dominated British politics – in 1857 as controversy raged about the onset of what became the Second Opium or 'Arrow' War, and in 1906, with the recruitment of

Chinese labour to work in the South African minefields – China was not generally a significant field of British imperial interest. China formed a very small part of Britain's pattern of overseas trade and investment. Opium certainly dominated the finances of the British Indian state, but by the later nineteenth century that trade did not dominate British trade with China. The role of China in the frenetic world of the 'New Imperialism' of the latter nineteenth century has received recent attention, not least in the high politics of realignment in Europe in the 1890s and early 1900s, but the foreign presence in China itself, although spatially greatly extended in the decade after Japan's victory over China in the 1894-95 conflict, was not in and of itself important in those debates.<sup>4</sup> The China trader faced a continual problem of recognition. He was a big fish in his Chinese pond, in Shanghai, Tianjin, Fuzhou or Canton, but he was small fry in the bigger sea of British empire. He even seemed a little exotic. He governed himself at Shanghai, having no Governor and his colonial state apparatus to hand. Consuls were prominent and important figures, but the Shanghai grandee felt he could ignore them, and up to a point he was right.

Still, the China trader lobbied for recognition. He had to, for he was out of sight, over the boundaries of formal empire. He used a wide repertoire of tactics: orthodox pressure group lobbying, more personal ties, pamphleteering.<sup>5</sup> China coast activists largely controlled the flow of news about and from China, for most newspapers overseas relied on local foreign journalists – usually editors or reporters from the English-language press there – to act as their correspondents. And the foreign community in Shanghai attempted to effect recognition by normalising its built environment in foreign terms, by populating its Bund with the types of memorial that peppered the colonial world, its metropolitan centres and its colonial sites.<sup>6</sup> This was

a two-fold process too, for at one and the same time Shanghai's foreign communities, mostly but not only its British community, aimed to fix themselves securely within the global circuits of British empire. They also attempted to fix themselves securely at the heart of the British China enterprise. That was after 1860 headquartered at Peking, in the grand British Legation there, but the Shanghailanders (as he fashioned himself) was not content with subordination to diplomats at Peking, for he felt that he was not a ward of those diplomats, but made his own history. In fact, he technically was a ward of the diplomats and consuls, with whom he had annually to register his presence in China, to enjoy the benefits of extraterritoriality, and under whose formal jurisdiction he operated. This rankled. And moreover, this was the capital of Britain's Chinese world, Shanghai, not Peking or Hong Kong, and he demonstrated that in stone and in bronze along his Bund.

## **2. Monuments and memorials on the International Settlement Bund**

Let us turn to those monuments, to those erected over a 60-year period commemorating the 'Ever Victorious Army' (1866), Augustus Raymond Margary (1880), Sir Harry Smith Parkes (1890), the *Il-tis* tragedy (1898), Sir Robert Hart (1914), and the Allied dead of the First World War (1924). In the heyday of the international settlement, a stroll along the Bund and into the public garden might take the walker past nearly all of these.

The first memorial erected on the Bund was placed there in early 1866, and its inscription proclaimed that it stood:

In memory of the officers of the 'Ever Victorious Army' who were killed in action while serving against the Taiping Rebels in the province of Kiangsu, A.D. 1862-64

A granite obelisk on a rectangular base, it looked very much like a mainstream funerary monument. It was in fact paid for not by the foreign community, but out of a grant by Li Hongzhang, the leading Chinese official in the defeat of the Taiping. The 'Ever Victorious Army' was one of two major foreign-officered units that operated in the Jiangnan region around Shanghai to thwart Taiping influence in the area. It was not much liked. It is 'a small mean monument', remarked Shanghai's first English-language newspaper, the *North China Herald*, which remained its most prominent:: 'it most resembles a better class milestone' ... 'the good taste of the community is outraged by the utterly unworthy erection'.<sup>7</sup> Painting it red in the middle of the night was not an unusual prank.<sup>8</sup>

**Insert Fig. 1 Ever Victorious Army Memorial**

The Taiping era was a wild moment in the history of the China coast communities. By 1862 tens of thousands of foreign troops were stationed at Shanghai. Cholera ravaged the city. The Taiping conflict ravaged its hinterland. By 1860 the British had definitively sided with the Qing rulers of China and turned their backs on these Christian rebels. The memorial then can stand as a monument to the triumph of foreign order, and foreign sacrifice in the pursuit of order. The necessity for armed intervention – and its costs – were clearly marked by this obelisk. But the key point about the memorial is in fact its association with the great romance of British empire that was the curious career of Charles George 'Chinese' Gordon, 'Gordon of

Khartoum'. A previously undistinguished Royal Artillery officer, Gordon led the 'Ever Victorious Army' in its latter campaigns, with the full support of British officials. It made his reputation, even if it did not defeat the Taiping, but the operations of the EVA were often assumed by the British, and by the British public, to have been vital to the defeat of the rebellion.<sup>9</sup> Gordon was an empire celebrity, and although the British China enterprise produced other celebrities, notably Harry Parkes, whose actions instigate the Arrow war of 1856-60, Gordon had greater value for the China British, for he operated on a far wider imperial plane. They used the monument and its association to in an attempt o mainstream their Chinese triumphs.

The earliest account of the memorial describes it as 'The Gordon monument', and Gordon himself stoked the association in later life. He planned to see to the monument's regilding and repair in 1880 when he returned to China with a view to taking up a Qing government appointment. I am 'dead to the world and its honours, glories, and riches', he wrote to his sister from Shanghai, but he was not in fact slow to help his own celebrity. The monument was colloquially known as the 'Gordon' memorial, and that association largely overshadowed its prime memorial function.<sup>10</sup> Originally erected at the corner of the Suzhou road and the northern tip of Bund, it was then moved twice, first (1908) to a plot inset in the boundary fence of the Public Gardens, which were created after it was erected, but open to the road, and then (1929) to a spot securely within those gardens on their northern tip. It was moved partly as a matter of road-widening necessity, for these Shanghai streets were always shifting their precise course, but we can also infer that the iron railings of the park offered greater security, for a public monument was always a site of potential public shame. They were vulnerable, not just to the elements or to tipsy pranksters,

but to deliberate political vandalism by anti-foreign or nationalistic Chinese – always feared, this never in fact materialised -- or to simple misuse, which was in fact much more likely.

Joining this first monument in 1880 was a 37-foot high Gothic-revival style memorial dedicated to a young British consular officer, Augustus Raymond Margary, 'erected by foreign residents in China as a token of their esteem for the friend whom they have lost, and of their appreciation of the services which he rendered'. Margary was serving in Shanghai in 1874 when he was ordered to travel up the Yangzi and then across country to meet a British expedition that was attempting to pioneer an overland route to China from India through Burma. Southwest China was just recovering from a tumultuous upheaval in the shape of the Panthay rebellion.<sup>11</sup>

Foreign nationals were known to have worked with the rebels. The British were less than frank in their communications with the Qing in their depiction of the expedition, and its scale. Margary made the journey, and met the party just inside the Burmese border, but travelling back ahead of them he was ambushed and killed in January 1875, his head allegedly displayed on the walls of the nearby town. The British were furious, despite their lack of candour about the scale of the expedition, and insensitivity to the politics of an area only recently pacified after rebellion. Bellicose diplomacy turned the Margary affair into the 1876 Chefoo Convention, which extracted further important concessions from the Qing to the advantage of the foreign powers. So Margary did not at least die in diplomatic vain.<sup>12</sup>

**Insert Fig. 2 Margary Memorial**



A committee to develop a memorial first met in December 1875, finalising its plans some 18 months later. The Shanghai firm of Scottish architect William Kidner (1841-1900), who was a member of the Royal Institute of British Architects, won the open competition to design a monument, which was funded by public subscription – 136 contributed, although this seems not to have produced an excess of funds, and there are suggestions that the result was an economic compromise.<sup>13</sup> It strongly echoed in its style Gilbert Scott's Albert Memorial (1872), and this is no surprise: Kidner worked for Scott on Shanghai's Holy Trinity Cathedral, between 1864-69, staying on in the city in practice thereafter.<sup>14</sup> He was joined by John Myrie Cory, who had also worked for Scott, and who designed the monument. It was carved in London by Farmer and Brindley, pre-eminent ornamental stonemasons, who had worked on the Albert Memorial itself, the Natural History Museum in London, Manchester Town Hall and Glasgow University.<sup>15</sup> Margary's memorial could have sat happily in any of those British cities. The monument was also overtly Christian. It was topped with a spire and cross, and texts from the Books of John and Job were inscribed on it.<sup>16</sup> It remained the only overtly Christian structure on the Bund itself.

There was controversy about the siting of the memorial. The Council would not allow it on a roadside site, nor in the Public Garden. The Consulate refused to allow its grounds to house it. Eventually, despite significant objections, it was placed, as a monument offered by the public (that is, the foreign public) in a public spot, at the junction of Suzhou road and the Garden Bridge. It moved, too, all 37-foot of it, into the Public Garden in 1907 when a new bridge was built.

The monument was unveiled on 10 June 1880, emerging from draped Union flags, an image of which was caught in a photographic that served as the model for a print published in *The Graphic* [See fig. 3]. The noteworthiness of the memorial lies in its unremarkable ordinariness, in terms of British public memorials of its era. It had no Chinese associations, but the Scott association and the Gothic-revival style placed it firmly in a wider world of memorialisation. Stone was carved in London and erected in Shanghai. Its other associations also placed it in the wider world that *The Graphic* also took it too. Margary's Shanghai connections were less firm than Gordon's. His death occurred 1,400 miles away, and if it had a tangible Shanghai connection, his own residence in the settlement excepted, it was that the expedition was in a tradition of attempts to reach India from Shanghai or vice versa. The key theme with Margary lay in the discourse around his death. Gordon was an imperial celebrity; Margary's was an imperial sacrifice.

### **Insert fig 3: Unveiling of the Margary Memorial**

'As the years roll on', wrote the editor of Margary's posthumously published journal:

England's special work in the world comes out more and more clearly. In spite of herself -- often against her will -- she has task after task set her in the wild neglected places of the earth, amongst savage or half-civilised races. ... The call comes, now from the oldest haunts and homes of men -- from India, from China, from Arabia, from the Malay peninsula -- now from the wondrous islands of the Pacific -- now from the vast unexplored regions of central or southern Africa. ... whatever the cause or form of the summons it is sure to have "vestigia nulla retrorsum" [no steps back] written over it. And the call,

however urgent, however exacting, has rarely failed to bring out the right man, whether it were for missionary, or soldier, or merchant, or traveller, ready to spend himself for his country and his country's work; simply, cheerily, unreservedly doing deeds the reading and hearing of which here in England make our pulses bound and our eyes moisten.<sup>17</sup>

Accepting the memorial on behalf of the Council -- which affixed its crest to it, to join the Margary family crest -- from the ad-hoc committee that had coordinated its development, its Chairman R. W. Little claimed that the hapless Vice-Consul had gone 'cheerfully with his life in his hand on a work for the benefit of us all'. It was 'another proof', he continued, slightly mis-quoting Tenyson's 'Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington', that:

Not once nor twice, in our rough island story

The path of duty was the path of glory'

Margary's sacrifice was a secularised version of the Protestant ethos of sacrifice that was to become more familiar in China -- for if, in Tertullian's phrase, 'the blood of martyrs is the seed of the Church', then the blood of imperial martyrs also sanctified China in the eyes of those watching it: it was the seed of empire. In private, Little had also reacted to the death of Margary with a statement of the need for a pragmatic, if not also racist commemorative violence, that 'In such a case, better 50 innocent people suffer, than one guilty escape! The white skin there must be protected by Fear.' Eventually no heads rolled over Margary, although they rolled as a result of foreign pressure after other incidents.<sup>18</sup> For all the talk of Margary as a friend, and the monument as a statement of personal affection, it was in fact a statement of implacable and inescapable intent. Duty called the survivor to honour the memory of the martyr through action.

That intent, and its celebration, was made yet plainer in 1890, with the unveiling on a prime spot on the bund, at the junction with Nanjing Road, and facing west towards it, of a statue designed by T. Solari of Sir Harry Parkes. Parkes looked into China in bronze, and in the flesh had been an architect of violence and of the forward movement of British power into the empire of the Qing.<sup>19</sup> He had arrived as a child in 1841, had witnessed the signing of the Treaty of Nanjing, and then worked his way up through the consular service. As Acting Consul in Canton in 1856 he had engineered the ramping up of a dispute over the British-registered vessel the 'Arrow', whose Chinese crew were arrested on suspicion of piracy, into what became a protracted and bloody war, which was only concluded when British and French troops were on the verge of attacking the imperial capital in September 1860. In the latter stages of the campaign Parkes and others were seized when under a flag of truce, imprisoned and badly treated. Half of the captives died and after some deliberation the British destroyed the Yuanming yuan, the Old Summer Palace, in retaliation. His reputation was too controversial for further China service, so Parkes was despatched to Japan where he served as British Minister (ambassador) from 1865-1883 before returning to hold the same post in Peking.

**Insert Fig. 4 Statue of Sir Harry Parkes**

The return of Sir Harry Parkes was a moment of celebration for the China British, especially at Shanghai, after a period in which they felt ill-served by British diplomats who studied Chinese too much, in their eyes, and taught the Chinese too little. Parkes was associated with action. He was looked to for a 'new and decided policy',

to 'put an end to the apathy' which had attended protection, in the eyes of traders, of their treaty rights. His 'quondam torturers', the Chinese, were apparently dismayed by the appointment, but how fitting thought the *North China Herald*. The Shanghai British met him as he landed en route to Peking, and presented an address. 'We shall all of us go about our duties with a lighter heart, and be easier in our relations with the people among who we have found out lot, from the knowledge that all our interests are secure in your able hands'.<sup>20</sup> This was all code, for what they meant was that British policy would be uncompromising, and where necessary, in their eyes, it would be forceful, not just diplomatically blunt, but militarily blunt too. But Parkes died in office, 18 months later, these hopes mostly unrealised.

'Parkes shall we never see again?/Gordon, from lost Khartoum?' scribbled 'An Englishman' in versifying response to the news, easefully joining the two.<sup>21</sup> His body was temporarily lodged at Shanghai before being transported to Britain, giving occasion for a very large public funeral procession that threaded through heavy rain down the Bund and along Jiujiang road to a mortuary chapel.<sup>22</sup> In London, on 21 July 1887, a marble bust of the late Minster by Sir Thomas Brock was unveiled in St. Paul's Cathedral, but at Shanghai they still discussing how to commemorate him. The Chamber of Commerce had established a memorial committee in 1886, drawing two representatives from the Council, and the British Consul-General, to add to two of their number. A substantial sum was then raised by subscription, and a statue was planned, the choice of design subject to the wishes of the subscribers.<sup>23</sup> They chose a design by T. Solari, the statue was placed on its pedestal in late March 1890, ahead of its unveiling on 8 April by the Duke of Connaught, the seventh of Queen

Victoria's nine children, when he visited Shanghai on his return from four years commanding the Army of Bombay.

Margary's monument had been unveiled consuls and dignitaries in attendance, but a royal visit demanded far greater pomp, military display, and public ceremonial. The settlement was decked out with lanterns at night, and gas-light produced stars and slogans. There were arches and triumphant and loyal banners for the day: 'Welcome to the soldier Prince'; 'The foreigner in far Cathay bids you welcome'; 'A British greeting in a distant land'; 'Our hearts are with you, Royal Duke'. Connaught had already visited Hong Kong, and was to move on to Japan and Canada, and Shanghai took advantage of this, to hook itself into a royal tour on a level with a proper colony, and to attempt to better the colony in its celebrations and style. And through unveiling the Parkes monument, a memorial to a man who had, Connaught stated, provided 'noble service to his country', and, 'I hope we may say, to the world; certainly to the civilised world at large'.<sup>24</sup> As he had been British Minister, diplomatic niceties demanded a cosmopolitan turnout from foreign consuls and Chinese officials. But although the Chairman of the statue committee claimed that foreigners of all nationalities owed him this token, Parkes stood for British power above all. His had been a truculent career, and its legacy had been the violence of the Arrow war. The larger than life-sized statue stood for violence and conquest. The unveiling ceremony was not the first occasion of a British royal visit – the Duke of Edinburgh had been to Shanghai in 1869 -- but Shanghai's foreign communities quietly competed to host royalty and celebrity.<sup>25</sup> Interpolating Shanghai into such circuits, making it a port of call for the Connaughts on a par with Canada and Hong Kong, was an important moment for the off-shore Britons there.

### Insert Fig. 5 *Iltis* Memorial

A cosmopolitan flavour to the events in 1890 was remarked on in reports of the ceremony – a German steamer slowly passed the memorial as the event unfolded, a band on deck playing the British National Anthem. The favour was returned with interest in 1898, when on the lawns north of Parkes, opposite Jardine, Matheson & Co's headquarters, the Bund's most striking monument was unveiled. The '*Iltis*' memorial commemorated the 77 officers and men who died when the German gunboat SMS *Iltis* was wrecked on the Shandong coast in July 1896. The steamer's journey had begun three days earlier in Shanghai, where the officers had entertained some of the community to a ball on board the day before departure, and it had that immediate personal connection. The monument took the form of a 6 metre high broken mast, cast in three and a half tons of bronze, on a pediment, with a bronze flag and staff draped across it, and it included panels showing the vessel itself, and the inscriptions: 'Die Deutschen Chinas' (The China Germans), and 'Die Kaiserliche Marine' (The Imperial Navy).<sup>26</sup> While it provided a fairly direct representation of the wrecked *Iltis* itself, the broken mast was a standard funerary device – a maritime version of the more common broken column. Completed by August Kraus working to the direction of noted German sculptor Reinhold Begas, and shipped out from Germany, the monument was unveiled by Crown Prince Henry of Prussia (Prinz Albert Wilhelm Heinrich von Preußen) on 21 November 1898 with great diplomatic and military pomp and ceremony.<sup>27</sup> On a cold, showery day, a religious service was held at the site, and a German military band played the hymn the crew had sung together on deck as the ship had sunk. The monument thereafter clearly served a

specific ritual function within the German community. Prominent officials paid their respects at it on arrival in Shanghai.<sup>28</sup> And for good measure, remarked the *North China Herald*, the 600 soldiers and marines who paraded 'must have impressed the natives as to the immediate resources of the Western powers'.<sup>29</sup>

The 'Iltis' ceremonial demonstrated very clearly on the Bund at Shanghai, in the heart of the British-dominated international settlement, that Germany had arrived as a power in China. In 1897, in response to the killing of German missionaries in Shandong, Germany had seized the port of Jiaozhou, and had begun the rapid development of the Navy-run colony and the city of Qingdao. This had prompted the hectic and hysterical 'scramble for concessions' by the foreign powers, which eventually saw Britain, France and Russia also secure new ports and other territorial gains. But if the *Iltis* unveiling was symbolic of Germany's new power in China, it was also threaded throughout by a counter narrative of cosmopolitanism. Jardine's had residual rights over the Bund lawns in front of their property, but had sanctioned its erection 'with much pleasure'; and the settlement was assuredly mainly British in character.<sup>30</sup> As one missionary writer noted: 'On British ground has been reared a monument painfully precious to the great German Empire'.<sup>31</sup> In fact, despite the tensions of the scramble for concessions, Anglo-German relations in the treaty ports – as well as in Hong Kong -- were very close. Many commercial interests were intertwined. That functioning relationship lay at the heart of the cosmopolitanism that was deemed to be celebrated in the unveiling of the memorial, and its siting on the Bund.



The dissolution of that partnership, and more widely of the idea of cosmopolitanism in Shanghai and China more widely, was also represented by the *Illtis* monument. Untangling Anglo-German ties had been problematic in China after the outbreak of war in Europe in 1914. When peace was declared in November 1918 a furious debate broke out in the pages of the *North China Herald* between those calling for the removal of the memorial, as representing German militarism or as a national symbol in a cosmopolitan space, and those defending it as a symbol of simple heroism. Not so much heroism, others retorted, but stupidity: if they had pumped instead of sung they might have saved themselves. The debate seems highly gendered, with men calling for its removal and female correspondents defending it. It was also about ideas of civilization. 'Is victory to turn us into Huns?' asked one objector. But the debate proved academic, for on the night of 1/2 December 1918 it was pulled over 'by a large party of foreigners whose individual identity is not known'. Composed mainly of French seamen, their identity was not in fact pursued. The monument was quickly moved into council store, and the foundations dynamited.<sup>32</sup> And it stayed in store until 1929, when it made the second-longest of the journeys of the Shanghai memorials, and was moved to the grounds of a new German school in the west of the settlement and re-erected at what became known as German corner.<sup>33</sup> There it acquired a new function for the new German community that developed in Shanghai in the 1920s (all Germans were expelled en masse from China in 1919). On 'Heroes day', which commemorated the dead of the Great War, it provided a focus for ritual and after 1933 this was steadily Nazified.<sup>34</sup>

**Insert Fig 6: Illtis monument pulled down**

The official embarrassment at the fate of the *Itis* monument, reflected in the fact that the huge structure was lodged in storage for over a decade, was compounded by two further considerations. Sanctioning the removal or demolition of monuments in the heat of a nationalistic European moment did not set a good precedent. From the 1840s onwards British and American diplomats and others had expended considerable energy on protecting European cemeteries and other memorials in China from the deliberate or hapless thoughtless depredations of Chinese. Protection of cemeteries had been inserted by US diplomats as Article IV of the 1868 Washington Treaty.<sup>35</sup> Foreign gravestones often announced their function in Chinese characters, and asked for respect. Memorials in Peking damaged during the Boxer rising and war were re-erected by the British thereafter. The fate of their monuments and cemeteries was to grow more prominent as a concern as Chinese nationalism grew in strength in the 1920s and thereafter. Even if Chinese nationalists did not see foreign monuments as symbols to attack, which on the whole before the 1940s they did not, the British and others feared that they would. In this the British in particular demonstrated the importance they accorded to memorial practices. Secondly, it was widely understood that intra-imperial conflict damaged 'white' prestige in Chinese and other eyes. This was about solidarity, 'race' solidarity, and cosmopolitan solidarity. 'This war is a terrible business', remarked the British Inspector-General of the Chinese Maritime Customs to one of his senior German officers in August 1914, 'It is a thousand pities it could not be confined to Europe but must invade the Far East where our countries have so many mutual interests and where we English have so many German personal friends'.<sup>36</sup> The mutual interests lay in the practice of imperialism, and a consistent theme throughout British and other writings about the impact of the First World War, was that by turning on each other, the Europeans

fundamentally undermined their position.<sup>37</sup> And they taught the Chinese that pulling down monuments was a fit and proper practice.

The last efflorescence of cosmopolitan display took place further south on the Bund, at its junction of Jiujiang Road, when a statue of Ulsterman Sir Robert Hart, who had served as Inspector-General of the Chinese Maritime Customs for almost 60 years, was unveiled on 25 May, with the Senior Consul, the Danish Consul-General Theodor Raaschou presiding.<sup>38</sup> The cry for a statue had been raised shortly after Hart's death in 1911 in the letters pages of the *North China Herald*. The foreign merchants of Shanghai should pay for it, wrote 'Tat', for they owed their fortunes to the efficiency and incorruptibility of the Customs service. It should be in 'marble or stone, shaped by the very best of modern sculptors, and designed by someone who knew Sir Robert's soul'. And it should be on the Bund.<sup>39</sup> As the service's Statistical Secretary (and so based in Shanghai), Paul King, together with the Shanghai Customs Commissioner H. F. Merrill, had taken the lead in opening debate about a suitable memorial in October 1911 shortly after Hart's death (and when minds might really have been otherwise preoccupied, given the developing anti-Qing revolution). As King tells it, 'the response was not overwhelmingly enthusiastic', but he agreed with those who felt that Hart, 'on his *public form*, deserved a statue' (the italics are his). But the Customs could hardly, however, use service monies to pay for this, and a statue needed paying for.<sup>40</sup>

**Insert Fig. 7 Sir Robert Hart statue**

It took a large donation from the Shanghai Municipal Council to really fill the pot and make a public memorial viable. Merrill let it be known to the SMC's Chairman that the service 'would welcome participation by the public ... so that the statue may be worthy of this eminent official'. The raising of the sum was put to the International Settlement ratepayers at the annual meeting in 1912. The Service, reported SMC Chairman Harry De Gray to that meeting, was only planning a modest affair sited in the Customs compound. But Hart's work, he argued, had developed 'the China trade as a whole ... contributing to no small extent to the success of Shanghai as the emporium of the Far East:

His name and fame fully justify a memorial of him, which should stand on the foreshore or elsewhere visible to every passer-by, with Harry Parkes and other great and tireless workers either of a time that has gone or one which is to come.

A 'much more worthy memorial' than that planned by the Service was needed, but could only be secured by public involvement. The argument was disingenuous, but the motion was unanimously carried. Aglen and the Service had managed successfully to distance themselves from the process, nudging the issue towards the SMC for action in private, acquiescing to the popular will in public. Aglen, noted De Grey, 'while clinging sentimentally to the preference for a purely service memorial', is 'in favour of welcoming the participation of the Municipality if such should be offered'.<sup>41</sup>

And so it was offered, and the sculpture arrived. The bronze figure, 9 foot high on a pedestal itself 8 feet from the ground, was to become a distinctive feature of the Bund, standing north of the Customs pontoon and in good view of those alighting in

the city for the first time. Henry Pegram A.R.A. (1862-1937) had been chosen as the artist. Other designs had proposed a 'central statue with allegorical figures grouped at the base'. But Pegram's design was 'at once simpler and more characteristic'.<sup>42</sup> And it threw all the emphasis on the man himself. King thought it 'commended itself generally to the public taste'. Whether it commended itself at all to Chinese residents, who had no vote, and whose rates and license fee payments made up the bulk of the SMC revenue from which the Council's subscription was drawn is another matter.<sup>43</sup> The choice of sculptor was telling. Pegram had produced figures for the entrance to the Imperial Institute in London in 1891-92 ('Britannia' and 'Industry' among them), and by the time of his death had also designed statues of Sir John Campbell in Auckland, and Cecil Rhodes in Cape Town (a bust of this was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1903). Rhodes had made Pegram's name, acting London Secretary A. G. H. Carruthers noted in early 1914.<sup>44</sup> So Pegram's was an imperial *oeuvre*, physically further linking the metropolitan with the settler empire, and insinuating Hart, and the Customs – as well as Shanghai of course -- into that story of Greater British empire making.<sup>45</sup> As Shanghai had been incorporated into the networks (shipping, telegraph, financial), which formed the sinews of British empire, so it inserted itself into the describing and telling of that same empire, adapted an imperial vocabulary, and called on its artists and representational strategies.

True, the main inscription, composed by Harvard University President Charles William Eliot, told a different story: Hart was a 'trusted counsellor of the Chinese government', a 'true friend of the Chinese people'. He was not a British empire maker: the CMCS and its related agencies instead formed 'a work of great beneficence for China and the world'. But it was the statue which spoke, and the

location, for Hart's association was not with Shanghai, but with Peking. Two panels represented the Postal and Lights services, initiatives which facilitated communications and shipping, and so the incorporation of China, and of the foreign merchants of Shanghai, into global networks of trade and finance.

The unveiling ceremony was impressive. A large crowd gathered at the site, which was 'gaily decorated with flags', the five-barred flag of the new Republic predominating. Sailors from foreign warships in the harbour, under the command of a US officer, lined three sides of the enclosure, and the Customs Company of the Shanghai Volunteer Corps also paraded.<sup>46</sup> Two of its members stood at the foot of the statue. The Shanghai consular body turned out in full, as did local Chinese military commanders and officials, Customs and postal staff and local missionaries. The municipal band, conducted by German musician Richard Buck, opened proceedings with an overture before Shanghai Customs Commissioner F. S. Unwin and then Consul General Raaschou delivered their eulogies. Unwin said that he spoke for the feelings of the Postal and Customs services, and 'thought it might be said that Sir Robert Hart was beloved and revered by many and respected by all. He did not think that any man was served with greater ability and devotion'. Raaschou spoke of Hart's impact on events since 1863, of how he had developed the service, secured China's revenues, lit the coast and developed the posts – and also developed such a cadre of 'gifted men drawn from many countries' that the customs was in sound shape after his passing. Unwin consigned the statue to the care of the SMC, whose Chairman promised to 'care for and cherish' it.<sup>47</sup> This was all entirely within the pattern of established settlement ceremonial, which marked out its

anniversaries and coronations, funerals, arrivals and departures with imperial military pomp and circumstance.<sup>48</sup>

The statue was moved in 1926 when the Bund was widened, and placed on a site directly in front of the newly-rebuilt Customs House on a higher pedestal which showed it 'to much greater advantage'.<sup>49</sup> Its original location had not, for once, been the subject of much argument in 1914, but the direction it faced had been. Hart faced north, looking up the bund towards Sir Harry Parkes. This was despite objections from committee members who felt that this undermined the entire aspect of the design of the Bund as it was evolving. He should look west, as Parkes did. But this was overruled. It can be assumed that by facing north, with lawns in front of it, opportunities were better provided for viewing the statue, for as it faced west it immediately overlooked the busy road. A site closer to the Customs House itself was also over-ruled by the committee, 'chiefly because it is not used as a promenade by foreigners, is nearly always surrounded by rickshaws and wheelbarrows, is completely railed in and frequently enveloped in the smoke of launches'.<sup>50</sup> The statue was designed to be seen by Europeans. While it became the first statue with a Chinese inscription (although some of that inscription was incorrectly rendered), it was not designed to be viewed by Chinese.

As the statue moved, and rose up in height, it turned about to face west. Hart now stood with his back to the Customs' Examination shed, and faced opposite the main doors of the Custom House. This brought the memorial in to line with Parkes. It also suggests how the Bund was changing. By 1927, after a sustained public campaign, and in the light of very bad international publicity, the SMC was being forced to open

the Bund lawns and the Public Garden to Chinese use.<sup>51</sup> There could be little pretence for much longer that the Bund was a European preserve. And practical urban planning forced compromises with the aesthetics of public memorialisation. Hart was moved to the middle of the road, but his presence at least loomed over Customs staff as they went to and from their business. But views of the statue could be translated into other media, as well, for it was never enough for it to be seen on the Bund, free of smoke and rickshaws, but it needed to be known about and seen further abroad. Hart's nephew, and Aglen's successor, Sir Frederick Maze was involved in discussions about the relocation of the monument in 1927 when Commissioner at Shanghai, and in 1929, freshly – and highly controversially -- appointed to the Inspector-Generalship ordered the publishing of a pamphlet commemorating the statue's new form and location, which was widely circulated.<sup>52</sup> Maze used the statue to demonstrate that he was a loyal Service man. His predecessor Sir Francis Aglen's involvement in 1912 is clear, but the association was more discreet in public.<sup>53</sup> But Maze was more brazen, and in fact invested much more heavily in public memorialisation as a tool for justifying his own appointment. Shanghai's statues served communal and individual agendas.

The last of the main Shanghai monuments was unveiled on 16 February 1924. This was the Allied War Memorial, symbolically sited at the intersection of the French Concession and the International Settlement on the Bund opposite Avenue Edward VII (the built over Yangjingbang creek). This again placed Shanghai at the heart of the wider British empire story. As historians undertaking cost-benefits analysis of British empire have shown, the intangibles of empire were vital to the British state. The continued affinity of Britons of overseas Britons with 'home' meant that in times



of crisis, very great numbers of Britons returned to Britain to fight in the armed forces. Shanghai was no exception. Nor was there any allied monopoly. German residents left in 1914 where they could to join up, many making their way to Qingdao. Hundreds left to fight. At least 200 Shanghai Britons alone were killed. Planning for a memorial began in earnest in early 1917, when the British Chamber of Commerce first proposed the reserving of the site later chosen.<sup>54</sup> This spectacular monument, on its towering plinth, designed by a local firm of British architects, was dedicated at a large ceremony.<sup>55</sup> It was surmounted by a bronze 'Angel of victory', and figures of two children, commissioned from the British sculptor Henry Fehr, and inscribed on it was the simple legend 'Ad mortuorum gloriam'.

Fehr was well known for a number of his war memorials, including one at Graaf Reinet in the Eastern Cape. The Shanghai War Memorial is more ostentatious than many, if we consider it in relation to the civic war memorials that were erected after the Great War in France and Britain. In that way, it communicates something of the extravagance of the Shanghai foreigner and his need to shout more loudly to be heard. The interesting points about it, however, are more that for the first time a memorial became the regular site of civic ritual, notably on Armistice Day (11 November), but also on ANZAC Day (25 April). It was also quickly a site for anxiety, for its great size sheltered from sight passers-by who used it as a public latrine. As Shanghai Municipal Police regulations were periodically revised, policemen were instructed to mind that the settlement memorials were not misused. But letters of complaint are to be found in the settlement's archives, and in the press. Itinerant vendors congregated there. And it stank of urine, claimed the (British) United Services Association. It was being 'desecrated by natives of the coolie and beggar

class'. They slept in the shade, or simply loitered there. No police were to be seen. In April 1939 a Chinese constable was ordered to be stationed there throughout the day and up until 11 pm, 'to prevent further abuse of the site', but periodic complaints still came in.<sup>56</sup> We know little about how Shanghai's growing Chinese population viewed these monuments and memorials. Given that only one contained any Chinese text, we might wonder at what was known, or understood about them, not least in a city constantly replenished by migration from the surrounding region. But we do know that ordinary people on the Bund found practical uses for them.

**Insert Fig. 8 Unveiling of the Allied War Memorial, 16 February 1924**

Early Chinese commentary, in guidebooks for example, is mostly simply descriptive, explaining who the figures represent, what they are made out of, and how this type of public memorialisation is a 'Western' custom (this is the thrust of the text in fig. 4). They were clearly part of the repertoire of visual symbols of the city. They recur as images in the cinema in 1930s: Parkes and Hart both appear in the opening sequence of the 1937 film 'Street Angel' (马路天使 *Malu tianshi*) nicknames, as part of a hectic visual collage displaying Shanghai's modernity and cosmopolitanism. They are simply a part of the streetscape for those representing the city, though they might be read as part-symbolising how the city is overshadowed by foreign power. Popular attitudes are harder to gauge. The Parkes statue had a Chinese nickname – 'tieren', 'Iron Man' – as it was close by a well-used ferry jetty.<sup>57</sup> The War Memorial acquired a nickname too, as the Victory Angel. Later propaganda was cast the memorials as intrusive and 'hated' symbols of imperialist triumph, but there is as yet no evidence to support any claim that this was how they were viewed by

contemporaries.<sup>58</sup> Most guidebooks are simply descriptive, explaining who the figures are, and when the memorials were erected. However, as we shall below, the fact that these monuments fell foul, even if by default, of the new nationalistic sensitivity and confidence in and after 1945 suggests a latent potential hostility to them. As Shanghai's foreign communities used their monuments to make overt public statements; it can hardly have been surprising that Chinese residents and observers heard these, and later acted on them.

After 1924 there were no further major memorials erected on the Bund. This was not the only site, it should be stressed, for public memorialisation, but it remained the key one, not least because it was the only large public open space in the settlement. Other open spaces were restricted to the settlement's parks, while the Shanghai race course contained within it a private Recreation Ground that did serve as a site for many public functions – parades, inspections, sports, etc. Outside the settlement statues and other memorials were erected in parks and other spaces to commemorate Chinese public figures such as Li Hongzhang and Song Jiaoren, or the victims of such events as the May Thirtieth 1925 Nanjing road shootings, when International Settlement police shot dead 12 Chinese men outside the Laozha Police station during a violent fracas. In the grounds of their consulate, the French had erected a statue honouring Admiral Protet, who died in action during the campaigns against the Taiping. There was also an earlier monument established to commemorate French marines who had died during the suppression of the Small Swords rebellion. Memorialisation proved infectious and important. The Russian refugee community signalled its cultural identity – for it had no other -- through subscribing to the erection of a monument, placed on a small French concession

traffic island, commemorating the centenary of the poet Pushkin's death in 1937.<sup>59</sup>

But the Bund's repertoire of symbols was not matched by any other site in the city.

And for that reason, after December 1941 and the outbreak of the Pacific War, when Japanese forces finally occupied the settlement, the Bund's memorials were all removed. Only the empty plinth remained, its winged angel flown.

### **3 All change**

Japan's seizure of Shanghai was, as elsewhere, justified as part of its anti-imperialist war for Asian liberation. Notwithstanding the cynicism with which this ideological underpinning of aggressive war was often viewed by its own military commanders, Pan-Asian ideology proved attractive to some, and was routinely celebrated in public ceremonial and in printed and other propaganda media. At Shanghai public parades were held to celebrate the liberation of Singapore, for example, from colonial rule. Despite this attention to the performance of its anti-imperialist credential, it was in fact a year before any move was made to deal with the symbols of Shanghai's old order. On 9 December 1942 the Shanghai Municipal Council was informed that various public memorials of the Allied presence in China were to be removed.

'Certain influential people', reported Council Chairman K. Okazaki, 'hold the opinion that under the present circumstances, it is not appropriate for certain statues and monuments to remain in the International Settlement'.<sup>60</sup> It should be noted that the SMC retained its international status and (albeit restricted) quasi-autonomy throughout the Japanese occupation down to its formal retrocession to the (collaborationist) Chinese city government in August 1943. That continuity is important, because the treatment of the settlement memorials indicates how embedded in the thinking even of the enemies of the allied powers was a notion of

Shanghai autonomy and difference. Japanese and German businessmen who formally ran the Council after Pearl Harbor had more in common with their former protagonists in the Shanghai game, than with the Chinese, or with the Japanese military.

There was little enthusiasm for this move. This was partly an issue of finance, but in the debates recorded in the archives it is also clear that there were other considerations. It was agreed by a Council committee of two Chinese and two Japanese members, that the Parkes statue was quite distinctly British, and the Margary Memorial too. They stood for British power, as 'symbols of British imperialism in East Asia', commemorating men 'whom the majority of the people in this part of the world sees no reason to hold in particular esteem'. But Robert Hart was a servant of the Chinese state, and with 'General Gordon's' memorial (as it was described) represented 'the memory of men having rendered meritorious services to the Chinese Government then existing'. With the Allied war memorial, the latter was 'dedicated to the brave men fallen in two historical wars, the casus belli of which it would be impertinent here to impugn', and which had 'no particular tinge of imperialism.'<sup>61</sup> The Council's predisposition was to remove the overtly British memorials, but to retain those with less British import. The new Mayor of the unified city was having none of this, and issued instructions in August 1943 that all were to be demolished, and handed over to his office, except Hart, who was transferred into the custody of the Customs.

**Insert Fig.9 Taking down Sir Robert Hart, September, 1943**

The removal of Robert Hart from his pedestal on a traffic island in the Bund in front of the Customs House and the small crowd of watching passers-by would later be caught on camera. The statue never returned to its plinth. 'Such stupid vandalism', noted Sir Frederick Maze after the war, 'is evidence of a state of barbarity', by which he meant Japanese 'barbarity': 'The fact is', he railed, 'their so-called "Civilization" is only skin deep'.<sup>62</sup> A British reporter, formerly editor of the *North China Daily News*, had written in of Hart in a book published in 1943, that:

here is a statue of him on the Bund outside the Custom House at Shanghai, facing towards the river, in his characteristic attitude with head slightly bent down and hands clasped behind his back. One may take it for granted that the Japanese, mad to stamp out every trace of the White man in the Far East, have torn it down.<sup>63</sup>

But nothing was torn down. Like many such processes, this one was actually quite bureaucratically proper and formal, and it was also carefully costed (removing two statues – Parkes and Hart – would cost \$5,000, 20 per cent more if the statues were to be preserved). In fact, the SMC had no enthusiasm for the removal of statues or, as this was also requested, the changing of street names. Symbolic gestures had to be paid for even in wartime. The Council had farmed the issue out to a sub-committee, accepted a report in June 1943, which called for the changes, and agreed that it would 'create a favourable impression with the public'. But it then decided to leave it all to the new city-wide administration established when the Settlement was turned over to Chinese control on 1 August 1943.<sup>64</sup> So it was all very civilized, and the statues were not removed until 9 September 1943, in time for the double-tenth celebration, republican China's national day.<sup>65</sup>

The Japanese military was to construct its own war memorials around Shanghai, but tellingly also, plans were drawn up in July 1944 for a 'Settlement recovery memorial', to commemorate the unification of the city and the abolition of the International settlement, and which would be built on the site previously occupied by Sir Harry Parkes.<sup>66</sup> The latter stages of the war were not conducive to the building of memorials however, and as far as we know, nothing was constructed there. But it may be significant that the same site late came to house the statue of Chen Yi, first communist-era mayor of the city. When allied and Chinese forces returned to the city in August-September 1945, they found a Bund bereft of its memorials, barring the forlorn plinth of the Allied War Memorial. It clearly continued to serve its Armistice Day and other functions after the war, but despite lobbying by the United Services Association, it was never reconstructed. The smashed remains of the Victory Angel were discovered in late 1945 and transferred to the grounds of the British Consulate, where we last hear of them, and see them, in early 1947.<sup>67</sup> It has, however, been reproduced, full-size, at the Chedun Film Studio on the outskirts of Shanghai. So the Victory Angel does in fact still stand overlooking an ersatz Shanghai.<sup>68</sup>

We also know that on 7 December 1945, a party of Customs staff in Shanghai was despatched on a hunt for the statue of Sir Robert Hart, and the plaques that had been affixed to its plinth. The Inspectorate-General had not yet been transferred back to Shanghai from the Nationalist's wartime capital of Chongqing, but the symbolic face of the Service, so mauled in 1943, was attended to. Rumour had it that the statue had been hauled off to Japan. But the men searched two metalwork shops in Shanghai, and concluded from their questioning of somewhat evasive witnesses

that the statue had in fact been melted down in one of them. The plaques, it seemed, had been removed from storage in the Customs House along with all over moveable metal objects as scrap values rose in the face of occupation shortages as wartime shortages hit. So the Service would have to do without Sir Robert on the Bund.<sup>69</sup>

The Bund memorials were removed to support a narrative of nationalist triumph over imperialism. The rage with which some responded to even the threat of their removal, and the energy diverted into attempts to relocate or reinstate them, demonstrates the place of such physical symbols in the worldview of the foreign communities at Shanghai. The fact that this anti-imperialist narrative was then serving Japanese militarist expansionism is irrelevant, and the incoming Guomindang regime happily accepted the *fait accompli*, and confirmed through its inaction the decolonisation of the Bund's symbolic function. Like its collaborationist predecessor it set about planning how to reinstate the Bund as a site of symbols that would articulate its own nationalistic vision, or mark its own anti-imperialist history. Lack of resource in the era of civil war and hyper-inflation meant that no new memorials were constructed. Unlike its immediate predecessor, the post-1949 Communist administration did initiate efforts to pare away remaining 'imperialist' symbols. The largest remaining sites of foreign memorials were the city's various cemeteries. Foreign diplomats noted by 1952 that inscriptions on tombstones that were deemed to be imperialistic were simply chiselled off. Moreover, it was noted by February that year that the statue of Admiral Protet had disappeared from the Lokawai Cemetery, to which it had been moved in 1943, on the retrocession of the French concession.<sup>70</sup> During the 1966-69 high-tide of the Cultural Revolution, still-surviving foreign symbols, like the Chinese counterparts, were in many cases



destroyed. The labels 'imperialist' or 'feudal' were applied quite indiscriminately to artefacts or, for example, inscriptions, that were simply foreign, or old. The scale of the devastation inflicted on China's built cultural heritage was extensive.

The Bund itself retained its symbolic role, not least as the Hongkong and Shanghai Bank building was taken over as the city government and Communist party headquarters. The takeover and reuse of such buildings provided an easy visual shorthand for the decolonisation of the city, one that was reinforced in publications that deliberately contrasted examples of 'Old' and 'New' China. National day and other staged political parades were held along it, and its familiar builtscapes was deployed into commemorative poster art, and even into the decorations of the 'Shanghai Room' constructed within the Great Hall of the People in Beijing in 1959. In one early poster depicting a parade along the Bund commemorating the establishment of the People's Republic the War Memorial plinth was included: atop it stands a statue of a communist People's Liberation Army soldier, and it is decorated with the Party's 'Star' symbol, underneath which the sides of the plinth have been rendered with designs in a Chinese decorative art tradition.<sup>71</sup> A ground-breaking ceremony was held for a 'Monument to the People's Heroes' in the Public Gardens on 28 May 1950, the first anniversary of the Communist takeover of the city, but no progress was made with building a memorial until the early 1990s. This and the fantasy of reuse of the war memorial aside, it is the Bund's buildings, or commemorative performance on the street, that was the focus of post-1949 representations of the Bund.

The symbolic skyline now decorating the Great Hall of the People's Shanghai Room is that of the eastern bank of the Huangpu facing the Bund, Shanghai's Pudong district. This is the site of some of the world's tallest buildings, and has developed at a rapid pace after the mid-1990s. But the Bund itself in the same period resumed its role as the location of important symbols. Two of these, the Monument to the People's Heroes (1994) in Huangpu Park (the former Public Gardens), and the statue of Chen Yi (1993) occupy the sites of the final resting place of the Ever Victorious Army Memorial and the statue of Harry Parkes respectively. It is unlikely that any specific dialogue with that past was intended, although the symbolism of the park/gardens as a former site of racist exclusion of Chinese was reinforced in academic and public debates in the 1990s.<sup>72</sup> A third statue, a copy of Arturo Di Modica's 'Charging Bull', installed in 2010 obliquely opposite the former Bank building -- now the Shanghai Pudong Development Bank -- does seem to have been intended to interact with the building itself, albeit coarsely, if the placing of the Bull's rear-end is taken into account. Where treaty-era memorials spoke to the ambition to incorporate Shanghai into circuits of global colonial power, Di Modica's Bull speaks to the reincorporation of China into networks of global capital.

What all the new memorials demonstrate, however, is the continuing saliency of the Bund as a site that invites memorialisation. Not only have such practices resumed at this particular site but, more widely, the European commemorative culture associated with such memorials have been imported wholesale into contemporary PRC state practice. Communist party officials gather on 1 October at the north end of the Bund and commemorate the revolutionary dead with silence, just as, until 1948, foreign residents would gather in silence a few hundred yards to the south.

Having shorn the city of the symbols of its era under foreign domination, the state now deploys the same practices in the same space vacated by its enemies. The Bund still talks. With the exception of Robert Hart, the men commemorated have no place in contemporary China's pantheon: the final verdict of SMC discussions in 1943 still holds. Hart's reputation is different, and there has been a resurgence of interest in him, in the shape of portrayals in television dramas, popular novels, or assessment in documentaries. The successor General Administration of Customs has evaluated his contribution and legacy in overall positive terms, though always placing it within a formal framework of the degradation of China's sovereignty represented by the foreign administration of the Maritime Customs.<sup>73</sup>

## **Conclusion**

Shanghai's foreign communities had to shout to be heard. Their problem was that they were – as one of the consular number put it in 1856 -- 'ten thousand miles-off', out of sight, and therefore potentially well out of imperial mind.<sup>74</sup> But they were loyal subjects of empires -- mostly in these examples of British empire -- and they demonstrated this in stone and bronze on the Bund. They needed that empire too: they needed its warships and troops, and for all their carping, needed its diplomats and consuls. They wanted its royal families to visit, to speak, to unveil their monuments, and utter soothing words of recognition. The British memorials also spoke loudly their vision of themselves as headquartering the British China enterprise, and spoke too of their vision of how that enterprise should be conducted. The statue of Parkes insistently whispered the need for violence; the memorial to Margary of the need to press forward, "vestigia nulla retrorsum" – there were no steps back, and Margary's martyrdom sanctified the secular China enterprise. These

were their imperial heroes. These statues and memorials also provided periodic occasions for large-scale civic ritual, in which the concerns and solidarity of the foreign community were displayed to great if transitory effect. Cosmopolitanism was the subject of much of the rhetoric of these events, although it was less concretely rendered in stone. But in records of the memorials, and in descriptions of them, cosmopolitanism, and solidarity amongst foreigners (less overtly stated a solidarity of race), were recurring tropes. The fates of these monuments also demonstrate the trajectories of solidarity, and intra-imperial conflict. But perhaps most importantly, in the last-ditch efforts of the SMC in 1943 to retain the non-British memorials, we can glimpse the power of the idea of cosmopolitanism, despite its raggedness in practice, and despite the fact that very often cosmopolitanism had been an Anglo-cosmopolitanism.

Building monuments also meant constructing sites of anxiety. They needed policing and cleaning. All were transferred to the Municipal Council at their dedication, and public funds were therefore used to maintain them, although none of them were municipal memorials (those there were, were located within municipal buildings). This was of a part with anxieties more widely about the fate of foreign memorials and cemeteries in China, anxieties that were demonstrated from the onset of the treaty era in 1842-43. The International Settlement was attentive to the monuments in its care, setting policemen and other employees to guard them and clean them. Their role within the Shanghailanders imaginary also demanded that. That attention outlasted foreign control of the Council, but it failed to outlast the Council itself, for the attention and importance accorded the Bund's memorials by those who erected and protected them, was also accorded them by the enemies of those who ran the

International Settlement until 1941, and who had their moment of triumph in September 1943.

The saliency of these sites was such that there were plans to continue their use, but as locations for monuments (or planned monuments) to anti-colonial triumph or other nationalistic endeavour. The Bund itself never ceased to have a symbolic role, but its function as the key site for important memorials and associated practices was reinstated after a hiatus of some five decades. Gordon, Margary, Parkes or Hart, or the men of the *Ilitis* or the two hundred Shanghai foreign residents who died in the First World War are no longer commemorated there, although traces of the memorials persist in Shanghai's history museums, including one located underneath the Monument to the People's Heroes. Here, photographs of some of the monuments are given captions that restyle them as symbolising the range of international artistic styles that made up Shanghai's nineteenth century cosmopolitan character. They are not presented as symbols of imperialism, nor are their commemorative functions within foreign Shanghai mentioned. They have been recast in neutral guise to support the re-appropriation of Shanghai's 'cosmopolitan' past, a process which underpins its aim to re-emerge on to the global stage as a world city. The colonial has become the cosmopolitan. The Bund's former monuments have been neutered.

## **‘Moving stories: Memorialisation and its legacies in treaty port China’**

Robert Bickers

All the images below are ready in 300DPI format, rights cleared where necessary. They are chosen to show a range of styles/forms of representing these memorials.

### Images

Fig. 1 The Ever Victorious Army Memorial, 1866



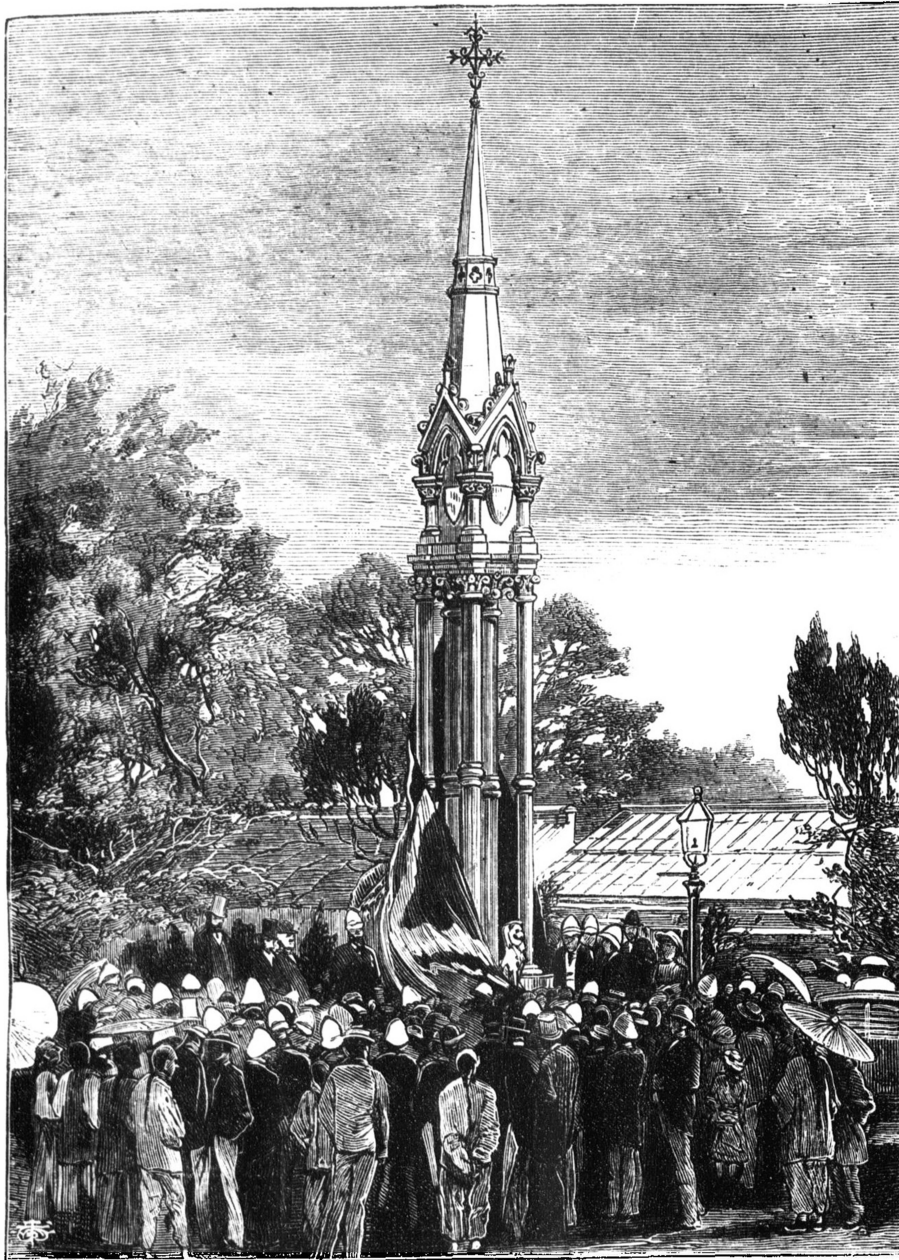
Photograph by John Thomson, 1871, Wellcome Library, London, No. 19320i.

Fig. 2 Augustus Raymond Margary Memorial, by William Kidner (1880)



Photograph by Walter Turner, Courtesy of Elizabeth Lillicrap

Fig. 3 Unveiling of the Margary memorial, 1880



MEMORIAL TO THE LATE MR. A. R. MARGARY—ERECTED AT SHANGHAI BY FOREIGN RESIDENTS IN CHINA

Source: *The Graphic*, 25 September 1880.

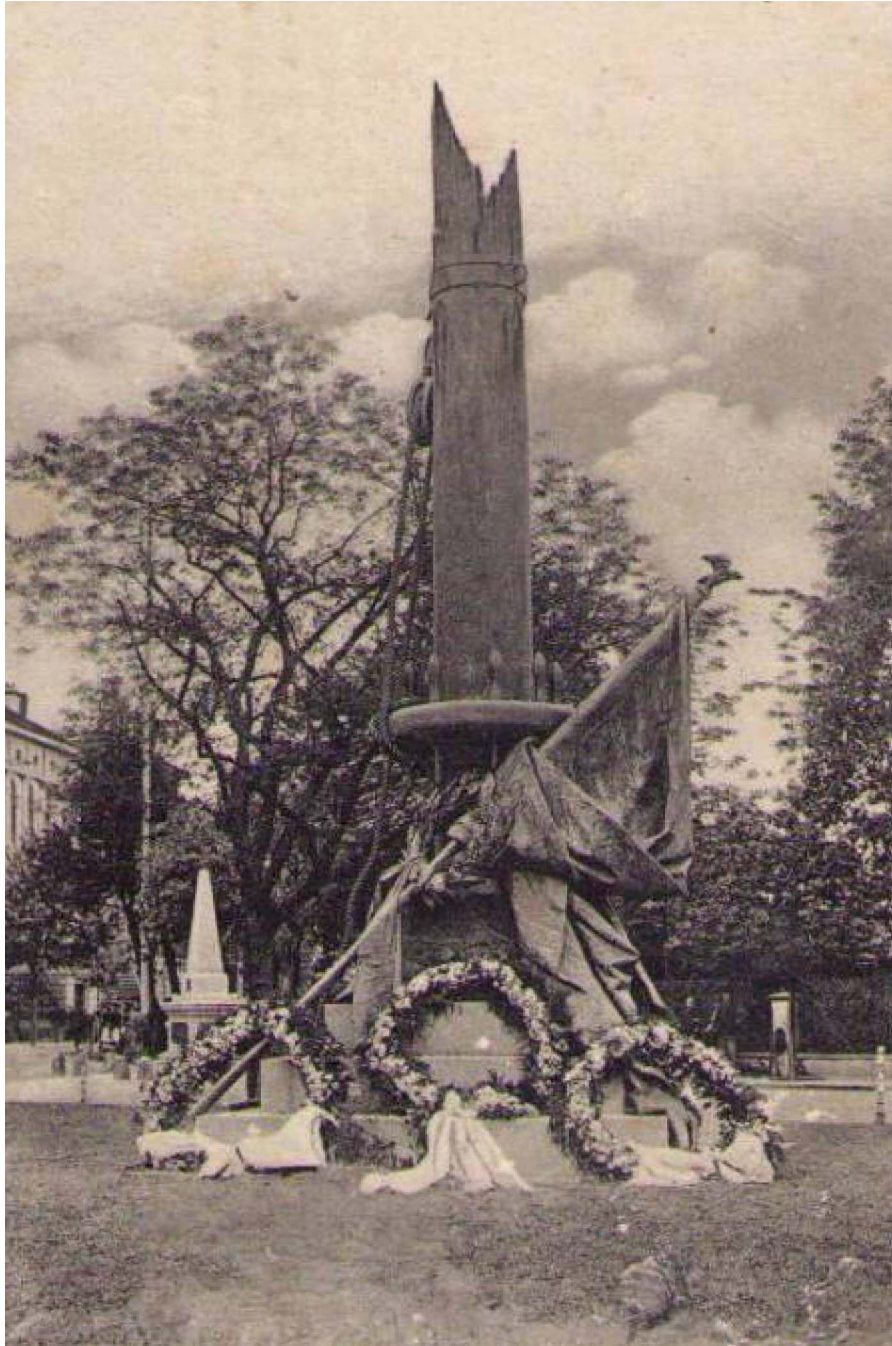


Fig. 4 Chinese print of Statue of Sir Harry Parkes, by T. Solari (1890)



Source: *Tuhua ribao* (Picture Daily), 1909.

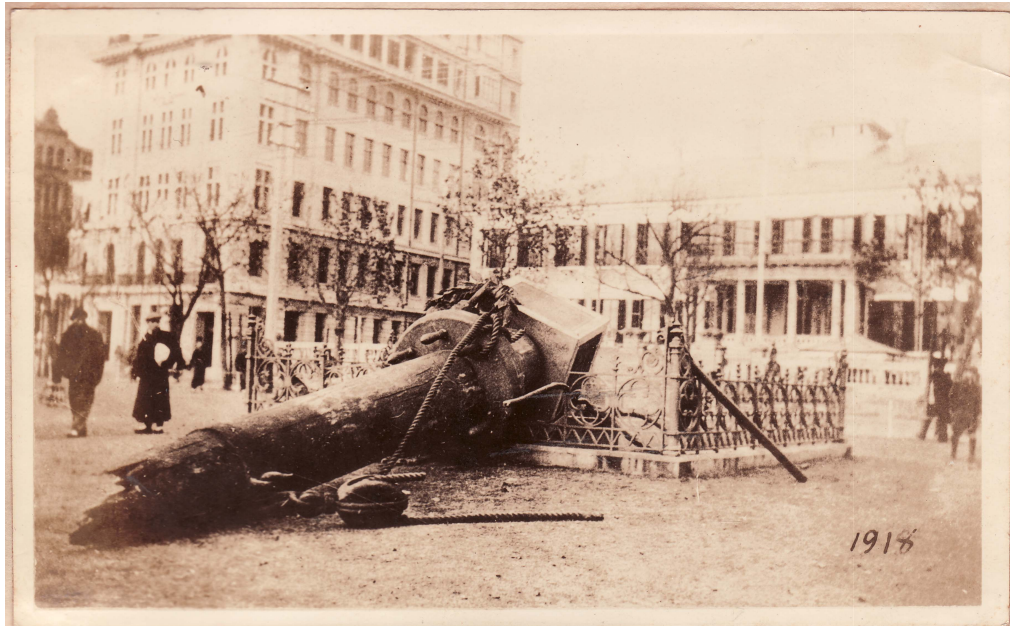
Fig. 5 The Iltis Monument, by August Kraus (1896)



Source: private collection.



Fig. 6 After the fall: The Iltis Monument on 2 December 1918



Source: author's collection.

Fig. 7 Statue of Sir Robert Hart by Henry A. Pegram (1914)



Source: author's collection.

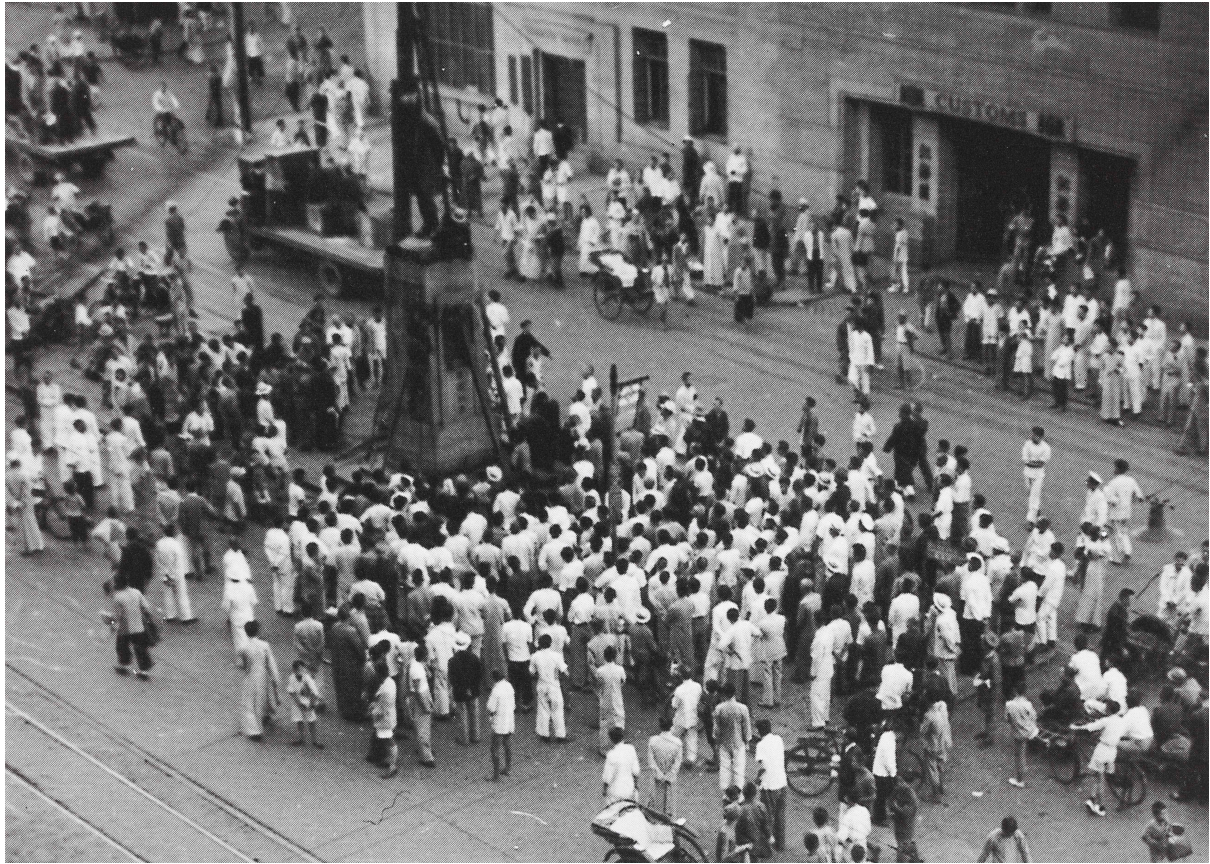
Fig. 8 Unveiling of the Shanghai War Memorial, by Henry Fehr (1924)



Source: author's collection.



Fig. 9 Dismantling of Robert Hart statue, September 1943



Source: author's collection.

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<sup>1</sup> See Zheng Wang, *Never Forget National Humiliation*, and Callahan, *China: The Pessoptimist Nation*.

<sup>2</sup> This and the following two paragraphs are drawn from: Bergère, *Shanghai*; Bickers, *The Scramble for China*.

<sup>3</sup> Zou, *Jiu Shanghai renkou*, 145-7.

<sup>4</sup> Otte, *China Question*.

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<sup>5</sup> Pelcovits, *Old China Hands*.

<sup>6</sup> Aldrich, *Vestiges of the Colonial Empire in France*.

<sup>7</sup> Quoted in Lanning and Couling, *History of Shanghai*, vol. 2, 402; *North China Herald (NCH)*, 25 August 1866, 839.

<sup>8</sup> *London and China Telegraph*, 13 December 1866, 553, quoting *Commercial Record* (Shanghai), 4 September 1866.

<sup>9</sup> On these forces see: Smith, *Mercenaries and mandarins*, and Leibo, *Transferring technology to China*.

<sup>10</sup> *Letters of General Gordon*, 160

<sup>11</sup> Atwill, *The Chinese Sultanate*.

<sup>12</sup> On the episode see: Wang, *The Margary Affair*; Cooley, *T.F. Wade in China* 116-131.

<sup>13</sup> *NCH*, 15 June 1880, 513; SMC, *Annual Report 1880*, 113.

<sup>14</sup> Denison and Guang, *Building Shanghai*, 54; on Kidner see also his entry in the: 'Dictionary of Scottish Architects 1840-1980' URL:

<http://www.scottisharchitects.org.uk/>. He also designed the first of the Hongkong & Shanghai Bank's bund-side buildings: Black, *Between tradition and modernity*.

<sup>15</sup> *NCH*, 15 June 1880, 513, 522-3, also reprinted in SMC, *Annual Report 1880*, 113-115; Beattie, *The New Sculpture*, 24-25.

<sup>16</sup> At the request of Margary's mother: *NCH*, 15 June 1880, 523.

<sup>17</sup> Alcock, 'Biographical Preface', vii.

<sup>18</sup> R.W. Little to parents, 22 June 1875, Little papers, private collection; on incidents and punishments see e.g.: Rankin in "The Ku-t'ien Incident (1895), 30-61. Misquote: the poem reads that 'the path of duty was the way to glory'

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<sup>19</sup> There is no modern biography of Parkes, and we must make do with a hagiography, which does at least include many extracts from his private papers: Lane-Poole and Dickins, *Life of Sir Harry Parkes*.

<sup>20</sup> *NCH*, 11 May 1883, 513; 8 September 1883, 287-8.

<sup>21</sup> They had in fact liaised closely in the latter stages of the Taiping campaigns.

<sup>22</sup> *NCH*, 18 April 1885, 432-3.

<sup>23</sup> *SMC, Annual Report 1886*, 148-50.

<sup>24</sup> *NCH*, 11 April 1890, 440.

<sup>25</sup> There were in addition the visits to Shanghai of Grand Duke Alexis of Russia (1872), Prussia's Prince Henry (1898), Japan's Prince Fushimi Sadanaru (1907), and of former US President General Grant (1879).

<sup>26</sup> The design originated with a Captain Müller, and was finalised by another artist, but further details are not yet clear: *NCH*, 8 November 1898, 1013.

<sup>27</sup> Council correspondence about the installation of the monument is in Shanghai Municipal Archives (SMA), U1-1-716. A detailed account of the monument is provided by Navarra, *China und die Chinesen*, 529-534. On Begas see the catalogue to the 2010 exhibition: *Begas - Monumente für das Kaiserreich*.

<sup>28</sup> Such as Count Waldersee, when he arrived to take up his post as Commander in Chief of the allied force in 1900: von Schwarzenstein, *Ein Tagebuch in Bildern*, vol.1, 11.

<sup>29</sup> *NCH*, 28 November 1898, 1012.

<sup>30</sup> Jardine, Matheson and Co., to Consul-General, Germany, 22 October 1898, in Consul General to SMC, 28 October 1898, SMA: U1-1-716.

<sup>31</sup> *NCH*, 28 November 1898, 1014.

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<sup>32</sup> 'Police Daily Report, 2 December 1918', SMA: U1-1-1120. It was largely intact, although a part of the memorial – a small eagle at the tip of the staff -- was removed, it was anonymously surrendered a few days later at the French Consulate.

<sup>33</sup> Details of the return and re-erection of the memorial are in SMA: U1-3-2298; see also: Freyeisen, *Shanghai und die Politik des Dritten Reiches*, 48-9.

<sup>34</sup> The later history of the monument is currently obscure.

<sup>35</sup> 'Cemeteries for sepulture of the dead of whatever nativity or nationality shall be held in respect and free from disturbance or profanation'. Text is in Hertslet, *Treaties*, vol. 1, pp. 554-557; Williams to Seward, 12 April 1866 and enclosures *Papers relating to foreign affairs* (1867), vol. 1, 1507-510.

<sup>36</sup> Aglen to Wilzer 14 August 1914, Second Historical Archives of China, Customs Service Archive {CSA}, 679(1), 32834.

<sup>37</sup> Bickers, *Getting Stuck in for Shanghai*.

<sup>38</sup> Shanghai Shi danganguan (ed), *Gongbuju dongshihui huiyi lu* [hereafter Minutes of the SMC], vol. 19, 4 March 1914, 31.

<sup>39</sup> *NCH*, 25 November 1911, 531-2.

<sup>40</sup> King, *In the Chinese Customs Service*, 231.

<sup>41</sup> *Municipal Gazette*, 23 March 1912, 96-7.

<sup>42</sup> *NCH*, 4 April 1914, 71.

<sup>43</sup> King, *In the Chinese Customs Service*, 231-2; *Minutes of the SMC*, vol. 18, 24 January 1912.

<sup>44</sup> CSA, 679(1), 31840, 'London', Carruthers to Aglen, Semi-official No. 3, 10 March 1914.

<sup>45</sup> *Who Was Who*, vol. 3, 1061; Chamot, Farr and Butlin, *Modern British Paintings*, vol. 2, 515-16; Graves, *Royal Academy of Arts*, vol. 6, 97.



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<sup>46</sup> Customs personnel had long joined the SVC, but the Customs Company was formed in 1900 to aid recruitment. It was disbanded in 1926 after which volunteering was forbidden Customs employees.

<sup>47</sup> *NCH*, 30 May 1914, 671-2; *Social Shanghai* vol. 17 (1914), 149-52.

<sup>48</sup> Goodman, 'Improvisations on a Semi-colonial theme', 889-926.

<sup>49</sup> School of Oriental and African Studies, Papers of Sir Frederick Maze, Semi-Official letters to Inspector-General, vol. 9, Shanghai Semi-Official, 771, 2 August 1927.

<sup>50</sup> H. F. Merrill to W. O. Leveson, 24 January 1914, SMA U1-2-438.

<sup>51</sup> Bickers and Wasserstrom, 'Shanghai's "Chinese and Dogs Not Admitted" sign, 444-66.

<sup>52</sup> The pamphlet and related documents are in: CSA, 679(1), 11043, 'Mr. Robert Hart's Career'. It was reprinted in *Documents Illustrative*, vol. 4.

<sup>53</sup> Acting London agent A. G. H. Carruthers kept him informed in private about the statue's progress: see letters in CSA, 679(1), 31840, 'London', Carruthers to Aglen, Semi-official No. 3, 10 March 1914.

<sup>54</sup> Bickers; *Getting Stuck in For Shanghai*, 95-96; SMA, U 1-2-502, British Chamber of Commerce (Shanghai) to Acting Secretary, SMC, 30 Jan 1917; SMC Engineer and Surveyor, to Secretary SMC, 31 Jan 1917.

<sup>55</sup> Architects: Stewardson & Spence. Herbert Marshall Spence seems to have been the lead designer: *NCDN*, 19 March 1923, 3.

<sup>56</sup> See correspondence in SMA, U1-1-3485.

<sup>57</sup> Shanghai tongshe (ed.), *Shanghai yanjiu ziliao*, 370-77.

<sup>58</sup> The most comprehensive Chinese account is in Xue, *Waitan de lishi*, 240-63.

<sup>59</sup> *North China Daily News (NCDN)*, 11 Feb 1937, 9; *NCH*, 27 February 1937, 282.

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<sup>60</sup> SMA, U1-4-1828: SMC Minute, 9 December 1942. Allied nationals had, of course, already been removed from the council, although not from much of the administration itself. On the SMC in this period see: Bickers, 'Settlers and Diplomats', 229-56.

<sup>61</sup> SMA, U1-4-3495, 'Statues and monuments', undated note, c. February 1943.

<sup>62</sup> Later, postwar, comment on a letter from former Japanese Customs Commissioner Kurosawa to Maze, 28 November 1929, SOAS, Papers of Sir Frederick Maze, Confidential letters, vol. 3.

<sup>63</sup> Green, *Foreigner in China*, 98.

<sup>64</sup> *Minutes of the SMC*, vol. 28, 9 December 1942, 497-8, 2 June 1943, 515-8.

<sup>65</sup> *Shanghai Times*, 10 September 1943, 2.

<sup>66</sup> SMA, U1-14-6608.

<sup>67</sup> *NCDN*, 22 January 1947, 1. The plinth was only taken down in 1960: *South China Morning Post*, 8 August 1960, 6.

<sup>68</sup> I am grateful to Jeff Wasserstrom for alerting me to this, and for images of the monument.

<sup>69</sup> Houghton Library, Harvard University, fMS Am 1999.17, Lester Knox Little papers, vol. 3, 'IGS Confidential correspondence with Foreign embassies, Naval and Military Authorities, 1948', L. K. Little to L. H. Lamb, 12 April 1948, and enclosed 'Extract from Daily report Book: "C" Party Inspection, Alien Property Administration, 7 December 1945'. Part of the plinth, with the Chinese text 'Hede tongxiang' (Statue of Robert Hart), was discovered in Shanghai's Heping Park in 1986, and transferred to the Shanghai History Museum: Xue, *Waitan de lishi*, 261.

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<sup>70</sup> Jean Royer, chargé d'affaires to Minister of Foreign Affairs, 9 February 1952, File 650-PO-A35, Archives diplomatiques de Nantes. I am grateful to Christian Henriot for providing this reference.

<sup>71</sup> 'Qingzhu Zhonghua renmin gonghe guo chengli youxing (Shanghai)' (Parade celebrating the Founding of the People's Republic of China (Shanghai)) [1950], Hangzhou National Art School, published by Mass Fine Art Publishing House. Chromolithograph on paper: collection of the Shanghai Propaganda Poster Art Centre; *Shanghai yuanlin zhi*, 28.

<sup>72</sup> Huebner, 'Architecture of the Shanghai Bund', 127-65; Bickers and Wasserstrom, 'Shanghai's "Chinese and Dogs Not Admitted" sign'.

<sup>73</sup> For example, see the television documentary: *Waitan* (The Bund).

<sup>74</sup> Meadows, *Chinese and their rebellions*, 62.